

WEEKLY REPORT
(For the Administrator's Report)
Region 3
Environmental Protection Agency
Week of January 27, 2014

30-60 Day Outlook:

During the week of January 27, the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) is expected to release a Draft Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) for the King Coal Highway/Buffalo Mountain Surface Mine. In June 2013, EPA rated the project environmentally unsatisfactory and raised concerns about the lack of alternatives analysis. EPA, USACE and the Federal Highway Administration have been meeting bi-weekly to attempt to resolve our issues and work towards finalizing the SEIS. This issue will be of interest to the mining community, West Virginia citizens and environmental groups.

Potential or Expected Press Stories, Significant Policy, Regulatory, or Legal Actions:

By the week of January 27, Greenwire is expected to publish a story on wetlands enforcement history at natural gas sites and why companies are not more familiar with the environmental regulations they need to comply with. As part of this story, during the week of December 30, Greenwire interviewed Region 3 wetlands staff regarding a recent settlement with Chesapeake Appalachia in West Virginia.

Grant Announcements:

None scheduled at this time.

Legislative Engagement:

None scheduled at this time.

Travel/public meetings/speaking engagements for the Assistant Administrators, or Regional Administrators:

None scheduled at this time.

Other Information:

On January 9 there was a chemical spill of approximately 7,500 gallons of "Crude MCHM" (consisting mostly of 4-methylcyclohexanemethanol) into the Elk River in Charleston, WV. The spill was a result of a leaking storage tank at Freedom Industries in Charleston. The State of West Virginia and American Water have the response lead for the spill with assistance from EPA, FEMA and other federal agencies. As of January 21, American Water has lifted the "do not use" order for its approximately 300,000 customers affected by the spill. The MCHM plume in the Ohio River has reached locations in the State of Ohio. Freedom Industries informed the West Virginia that the facility has filed for Chapter 11 reorganization, but intends to continue all cleanup efforts.

Early January 21, Freedom Industries informed the State of West Virginia, the West Virginia American Water Company and their federal partner agencies that another chemical release occurred on January 9, 2014. This material has been identified as a proprietary mixture of polyglycol ethers (PPH). It was in the same tank and entered the water system at the same time as the MCHM. PPH represented a relatively small percentage (approximately 7.3%) of the total volume in the tank. EPA shared this information with the Chemical Safety Board and the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR).

The Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) provided the following information regarding the newly identified chemical: Toxicologic information on PPH is limited. Based on the Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) provided by the manufacturer, the reported toxicity of this material appears to be lower than the toxicity of MCHM (LD50 > 2000 mg/kg for the primary component of PPH vs. 825 mg/kg for MCHM). Given the small percentage of PPH in the tank and information suggesting similar water solubility as MCHM, it is likely that any amount of PPH currently in the water system would be extremely low. West Virginia American Water is testing for this chemical using samples collected both before and after the Do Not Use Order was lifted.

EPA will continue to support the State, American Water and its federal partners to address this new development and be available for sampling and monitoring assistance.